

defense spending and education reforms that he has not accounted for in the budget, and for years to come as the tax cut is fully phased in and scarce revenue is needed to meet our national retirement and health care obligations to the growing number of older Americans.

IDENTITY THEFT LEGISLATION

HON. DARLENE HOOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, four months ago, a little boy in Salem, Oregon named Tyler Benton Bales lost his battle with a rare genetic disease called Hurler Syndrome. Although I never had the pleasure of knowing him, Tyler was somewhat of a celebrity in Salem. In fact, he was the subject of a front page article in the Salem Statesman Journal last December, when a silent auction was held to raise money to offset the cost of an expensive bone marrow transplant that was his only chance to beat Hurler Syndrome. Unfortunately, Tyler's heart wasn't strong enough to survive the rigors of his transplant and chemotherapy. He was only sixteen months old when he passed away.

Mr. Speaker, there's nothing more tragic than losing a child. My heart goes out to Tyler's parents, and to all the other parents of children who suffer from Hurler Syndrome. Unfortunately, the heartache of Tyler's loss hasn't eased for his parents. As if it's not hard enough losing your sixteen month old child, the Bales recently learned—courtesy of the Internal Revenue Service—that someone is claiming Tyler as a dependent on their 2000 income tax return. As disturbing as that is, it gets worse.

Because of disclosure issues, the IRS won't give out the name of the identity thief to the Salem Police Department, even though identity theft is a felony offense in Oregon. The thief could live right down the street or 3,000 miles away—but if the IRS has its way, the Bales—and the Salem Police Department—will never know who stole their son's personal information.

Mr. Speaker, we can't even begin to imagine the anguish this family is going through. Tyler Benton Bales was so much more than a name, a date of birth, and a Social Security number—he was a little boy who was surrounded by love during his brief time with us. His parents—and the countless of other people who loved him—should not see his memory dishonored by a common thief whose identity is actually being protected by the IRS. That's why I'm introducing the ID Theft Loophole Closure Act. This legislation simply requires the IRS to furnish the name, Social Security number, and address of a suspected identity thief to state and local law enforcement agencies for the exclusive purpose of locating that individual.

Identity Theft is not a victimless crime. We must cut through the red tape that is preventing this and other thieves from being prosecuted for their crimes, and I believe this legislation is the right tool for the job. I urge my colleagues to support the ID Theft Loophole Closure Act.

RECOGNIZING GOMBE STATE,
NIGERIA

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, in April, I visited West Africa as part of the Congressional Delegation led by our Republican Conference Chairman, Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Among the most successful components of the delegation's mission was a visit to Nigeria, and, more specifically, a meeting with various Nigerian governors. The meeting took place on April 7th in Abuja, the capital city.

I had the good fortune of being seated beside Governor Alhaji Abubakar Habu Hashidu, the Executive Governor of Gombe State. Our discussions afforded me a more complete understanding of the numerous opportunities for American business investment in the particular region of Nigeria represented by Gov. Hashidu. Regional investments in the education system there, along with infrastructure modernization and utility enhancement suggest a genuine effort to promote foreign investment, particularly among American entrepreneurs. I found Gov. Hashidu to be an earnest spokesman for his state, and sincere in his desire to strengthen friendships between his constituency and the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I retain in my office a full report on the investment potentials of Gombe State, Nigeria. On behalf of this House, I personally received the document directly from Gov. Hashidu. By these remarks, I serve notice of the availability of the report to each of our colleagues as I have already delivered copies to Members who have indicated interest in its contents.

In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, I hereby submit for the RECORD, the introductory remarks of Gov. Hashidu which accompany the report, and which were presented to the delegation in Abuja. Gov. Hashidu's comments fully summarize his commitment, and that of his government, to economic expansion in Gombe State. His observations should be considered by every Member of Congress and I humbly beg this body's attention in this important matter.

ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY, ALHAJI ABUBAKAR HABU HASHIDU THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF GOMBE STATE DELIVERED TO THE DELEGATION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES LED BY REP. JESSY WATTS, JR. ON 7TH APRIL 2001 AT ABUJA

Hon. Members of Congress, let me start by, welcoming this esteemed group of Congressmen and women of the United States of America, led by Rep. J.C. Watts, Jr.

Your visit to Nigeria at this crucial time of our democratic experiment is most welcome. Our system of Government which is tailored along the United States Presidential system with both Senate and House of Representatives having their clear Legislative Schedules, has been an interesting experience. The various actors in the new democratic project are committed to the success of the experiment. So far, the three arms of Government have shown tolerance and understanding in the principles of power sharing. The experience has been very stimulating and it has the capacity for that providing opportunities to exploit our poten-

tials. We have recognised this fact and we are making effort to reap the dividends of democracy.

We in Gombe State are a dynamic group who have been noted for hard work. The State is endowed with abundant agricultural land and adequate water resources for irrigated agriculture. These have provided us with a strong base for food and cash crop production. The main cash crop is cotton. Cotton production has been an age long occupation that was recognised and encouraged by the British Cotton Growing Association with a ginnyery established since 1956. All the districts in Gombe State have established cotton markets for a very long time. Cotton production has increased tremendously in the state in recent time due to the positive approach adopted by the new democratic Government. For example, production has improved from 10,000 metric tons in 1999 to 50,000 tons in 2000. Government is planning to boost production to 100,000 tons in 2001.

Beside cotton, Gombe State is endowed with other agricultural raw materials and solid mineral resources. Huge quantities of crops that can adequately be used as raw materials by industry and also be consumed directly by house holds are grown annually in the state. Gombe State has the 2nd largest produce market in the North of Nigeria, second only to Kano, the commercial nerve centre of the North.

There have been various efforts to harness these agricultural produce but we are limited by capital application. Presently, apart from the two privately owned Cotton Ginnyeries in Gombe and the Mango and Tomato processing factory at Kumo, there are no end user industries to utilise these huge quantities of raw materials grown in the State annually. A substantial portion is therefore being sold out and transported daily to other parts of the country for domestic/industrial uses. We therefore need investors to come and invest in this sector in the State.

In terms of Solid Minerals, Gombe State is endowed with over thirty-five (35) different varieties of Solid Minerals which are suspected to exist in large commercial quantities underground all over the State. However, some of these minerals have been explored and are currently being utilised by the few companies

From the foregoing it is clear, our economic potentials are quite enormous. The only inhibiting factor is lack of industrial base. This is why our Administration is committed to the industrial development of the State. Already the National privatisation exercise has opened the door for potential investors to try their hands in the abundant opportunities in the country. We in Gombe State are eager to receive such investors with generous incentives. For example, Government will provide free land for any genuine investor that is ready to establish a factory here. We shall equally grant such investor a five year tax holiday. These and other generous terms awaits any willing investors(s).

Having mentioned these potentials I foresee a good business future for any investor from the United States who is willing to invest here. We have a dynamic group of dedicated civil servants who are committed to the developmental needs of the young State. The Community is peace loving and industrious. The security situation is excellent. Power supply is very stable and communication is good. When all these are added to the abundant cheap raw materials available.